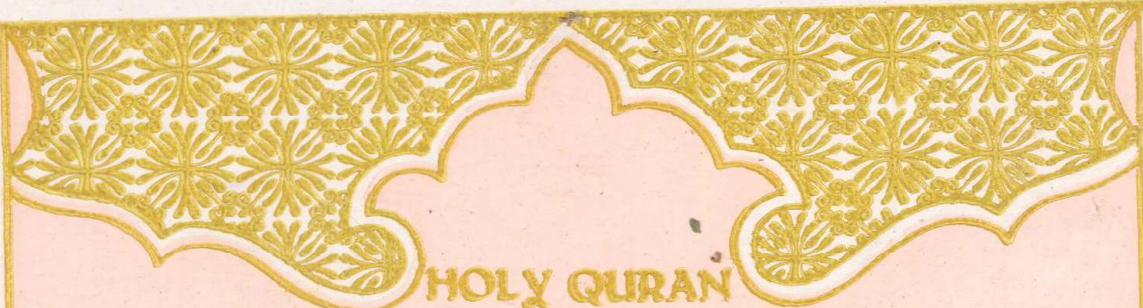




HOLY QURAN

TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

Qāṣir-ūl Qurān

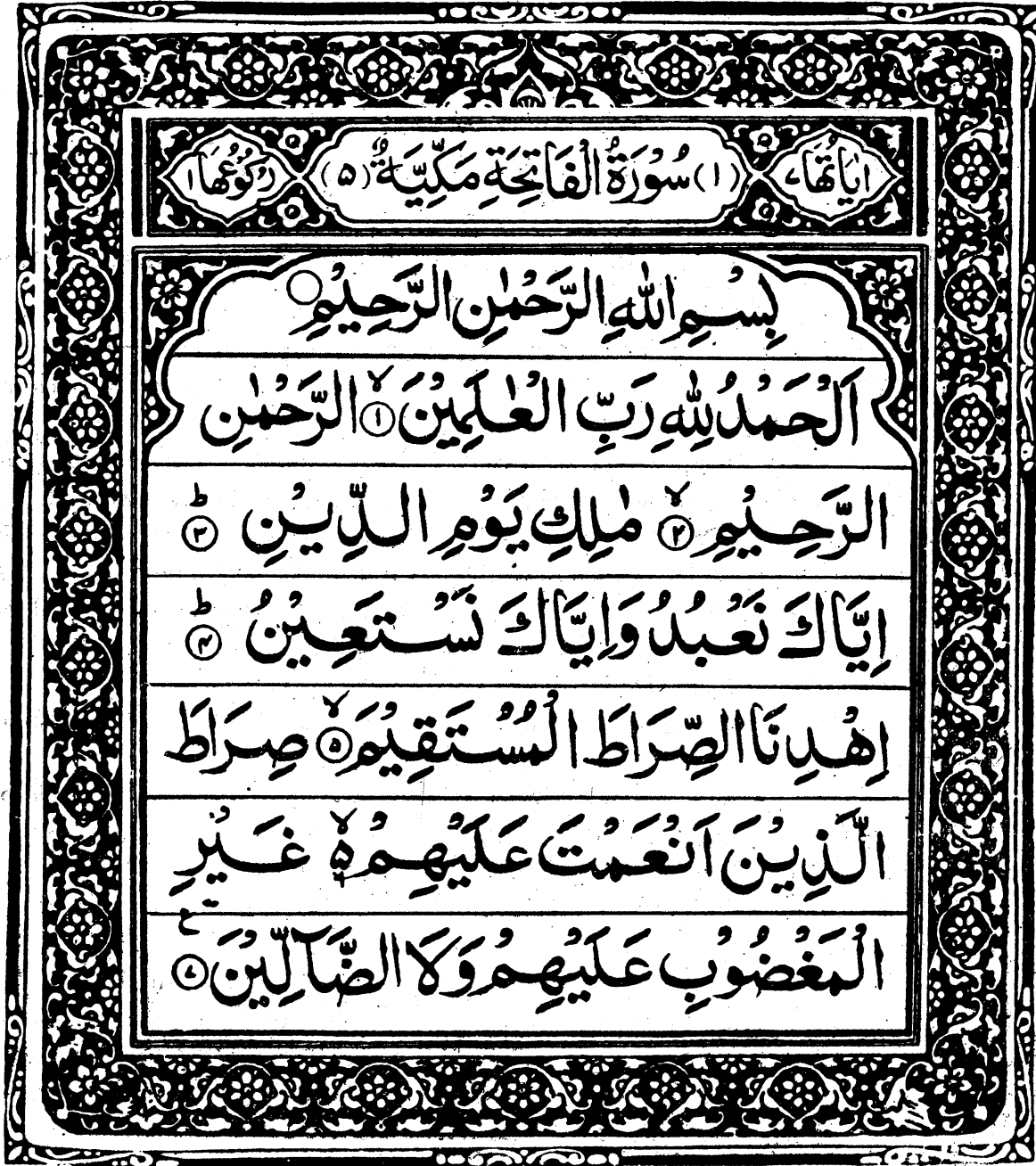
MAULANA ABDUL MAJID DARYABADI

INTRODUCTION BY

S. ABUL HASAN ALI NADWI

Vol.
I





PART I¹

Sūrat-ul² Fātiḥā³

The Opening. I

(Makkan⁴ 7 Verses⁵)

In⁶ the name of Allah,⁷ the Compassionate,⁸ the Merciful.⁹

1. (الحمد . . . العالمين) All Praise¹⁰ unto Allah,¹¹ Lord¹² of the worlds.¹³

2. (الر . . . رحيم) The Compassionate,¹⁴ the Merciful.¹⁵
3. (مالك . . . الدين) Sovereign¹⁶ of the Day of Reckoning.¹⁷
4. (اياك . . . نستعين) Thee alone we¹⁸ worship ;¹⁹ and of Thee alone we seek help²⁰.
5. (اهدنا . . . المستقيم) Guide us in the straight²¹ path,
6. (صراط . . . عليهم) the path of those whom Thou hast favoured.²²
7. (غير . . . الضالين) On whom Thy indignation has not befallen,²³ and who have not gone astray.²⁴

1. The Holy Qur'ān is divided, for convenience' sake, in thirty parts or *Pārahs* of almost equal length.

2. A *Sūrah* is a chapter. There are 114 chapters in the Book, each chapter having been named and assigned its proper place by the Holy Prophet himself.

3. A simple and pithy, yet wonderfully comprehensive prelude to the Holy Writ. Its beauty, grandeur and self-sufficiency simply defy comparison. 'A vigorous hymn of praise to God . . . The thoughts are so simple as to need no explanation, and yet the prayer is full of meaning.' [EBr. XV. p. 903 (11th Ed.)]

4. *i. e.*, revealed at Makka.

5. A verse of the Qur'ān is, like a verse of the Bible, one of the short divisions of a chapter.

6. A more accurate, though perhaps a little less elegant, rendering would be 'by.' The particle *ب* in *بسم الله* is *بسم الاستعانة* signifying 'by,' or 'through,' and is to be paraphrased as 'I seek the assistance of——.'

7. The word is incapable of translation. It is not a common noun meaning a 'god' or even 'God.' It is a proper noun *par excellence*. No plural can be formed from it, and it is, according to the best authorities, without derivation. The word connotes all the attributes of perfection and beauty in their infinitude, and denotes none but the One and Unique God, the Absolute, Supreme, Perfect, Tender, Mighty, Gracious, Benign and Compassionate. The English word 'God,' which is 'the common Teutonic word for a personal object of religious worship applied to all superhuman beings of heathen mythologies who exercise power over nature and man.' (EBr. X. p. 460) and which primarily meant only 'what is invoked' and 'what is worshipped by sacrifice.' (SOED. I. 808) can hardly be even an approximate substitute.

8. *i. e.*, the possessor of the utmost degree of mercy or compassion. The word *رحمن* is only expressive of God's love to man, and not of man's love to man, or to Him. The term is too strong to be used of men. All the *Sūrahs* (with one solitary exception) begin with this headline, which sums up in two brief, fine words God's relation to man—the relation *par excellence* of love, sympathy, concern, solicitude, compassion and mercy. This in itself is sufficient to confound those detractors

of the Qur'ān, who depict the God of Islām as a Deity cruel, wrathful, and relentless. The God the Muslims adore and worship, whatever else He may be, is above all, 'the Compassionate' and 'the Merciful.'

9. Contrast with this unreservedly monotheistic introductory formula of Islām the glaringly polytheistic introductory formula of Christianity:—'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

10. حمد is not only praise but it 'also implies admiration; and it implies the magnifying or honouring, of the object thereof; and lowliness, humility, or submissiveness, in the person who offers it.' (LL)

11. (and Him alone). Note the absolutely monotheistic note of the very first words of the Holy Qur'ān. It is He alone who is the recipient of all praise; the Praiseworthy; the Praised One. None of His favoured angels and prophets are to be associated with Him, even by implication.

12. 'Lord' is but a poor substitute for the Arabic رب, which signifies not only the Sovereign but also the Sustainer, the Nourisher, the Regulator, and the Perfector. The relation in which the God of Islam stands to all His creation is that of a righteous, benign Ruler, and not that of a mere 'father.'

13. i. e., the Universal Patron, the All-in-all Guardian. Not a tribal deity, nor the national God of any specially favoured race or people, nor yet the narrow 'Lord of the Hosts' or the anthropomorphic 'our Father in heaven'. Unlike many a tribal or national 'god,' embodying the spirit of a particular nation, and perishing with its death, He is the ever-living moral Ruler of the world. رب العالمين signifies 'the several sorts of created beings or things, or all the sorts thereof; or the beings of the universe, or of the whole world,' (LL) Anyway, the all-embracing and all-comprehensive Godhead of رب العالمين is evident. And from the unity of the Creator naturally follows the essential unity of all creation.

14. الرحيم and الرحمن are names or epithets applied to God; the former . . . may be rendered, 'The Compassionate'; the latter, considered as expressive of a constant attribute with somewhat of intensiveness, agreeably with analogy, may be rendered 'The Merciful' They are both names or epithets formed to denote intensiveness of signification, from رحم; like الغضبا from غضب and العليم from علم (LL).

15. Both words رحيم and رحمن are derived from رحمة which signifies tenderness, requiring the exercise of beneficence and thus comprising the idea of love and mercy. Both are intensive forms. The former denotes tenderness towards all His creatures in general, and the latter towards His worshippers in particular. The Divine attribute of *Rahmat* may on analysis be found to have the following as its components:—(1) His provision of everything beforehand that could be needed by man in the world; (2) His concern for the well-being of man, both in life and death; (3) His tenderness for man's helplessness, and (4) a disposition on His part to deal kindly and generously with man.

16. Or 'owner', i. e., Master with full powers to exercise forgiveness and clemency: not a mere judge bound to award punishment to the guilty.

17. (when His sovereignty shall be more evident than ever, and manifest even to the worst scoffers). The general Requital will follow the general Resurrection, wherein all men, good and bad, will be judged according to their faith and works. The verse completely repudiates the Christian doctrine that Christ, not God, would be the judge. Cf. the NT:—'For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.' (Jn. 5:22)

18. i. e. Thy humble servants.

19. (and none do we associate with Thee in worship.) Now begins the petition proper. The pronoun in *اياك نعبد* is placed before the verb for the sake of emphasis, and a very strong one is intended by prefixing the pronoun with *ايا*. Clearly there is no place in Islām for any Son-prophet or angel-worship. Contrast this with the open and avowed worship of Christ in the Christian Church. 'The Church... never ceased to offer prayer to Christ with the Father.' (ERE, I, p. 104). In the Catholic Church there are three distinct kinds of worship: (1) *latria* (due to God), (2) *hypodulia* (due to the Virgin Mary), and (3) *dulia* (due to the saints). Islām recognizes no such distinctions. In it there is only one class of worship, that due to God alone.

20. Note again the strictly monotheistic tone of the Islamic prayer. Not only is there to be no creature-worship but even the invoking for help of any saint, prophet, angel, 'Son,' 'Daughter,' or 'Mother' is absolutely forbidden. In Him alone Perfection dwells. He alone must be invoked. Contrast with this the doctrine of the Roman Church: 'That the saints who reign with Christ offer to God their prayers for man; that it is good and useful to invoke them by supplication and to have recourse to their aid and assistance in order to obtain from God His benefits through His Son.' (EBr. XIX, p. 820) In Hinduism the invocations to Indra, Agni, Soma and many others are too well known to need description.

21. (and right). *اهدنا* has much wider significance than 'showing us the way.' What the supplicant is asking for is not merely that the way be pointed out or verbally indicated to him, but that he may, by the Divine grace, be actually led on to his goal,—the Guide, as if, accompanying the guided and leading him on and on.

22. (in the matter of right guidance such as Thy prophets and saints).

23. (in consequence of their wilful and deliberate choice of the path of perdition). A strictly literal rendering would be, 'who are angered upon.' The anger of God 'is His disapproving of the conduct of him who disobeys Him, and whom He will therefore punish.' (LL) 'Righteous Indignation' has been defined in modern psychology as resentment come to the aid of the moral feelings,—retribution that must overtake wrongdoers and the tyrants and oppressors of mankind; and surely no indignation can be more righteous than the Divine one. It is a timid philosophy that hesitates to hate and condemn the evil and the evildoer in the

strongest terms. For the 'wrath' of God compare the OT:—'Let me alone that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them.' (Ex. 32: 9-10) 'I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the Lord was wroth against you.' (Dt. 9: 19) And the NT:—'O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?' (Mt. 3: 7) 'And he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.' (Re. 19: 15)

24. *i. e.*, those who have deviated from the right course owing to their heedlessness and want of proper serious thinking.